(iv) Rs. 500 crores as a special venture capital type fund named as "Laghu Udyog Nirman Nidhi" for equity support.

The other major recommendations of the study group include a three tier definition for small enterprises, a comprehensive law for the sector including simplification of procedures, continuation of reservation, selective enhancement of investment limit, creation of corpus for infrastructural development and incubation centres, improving flow of credit through raising limit of composite loans, various financial and fiscal measures such as raising of excise exemption limit and other measures, schemes for teachnology upgradation, marketing etc.

Exploitation of Potential of Khadi and Village Industries

2730. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a study has been carried out by Government to find out the possibilities of expansion and development of the Khadi and Village Industries in the country as well as in the global market;

(b) if so, the potential of Khadi and Village Industries to step up production and export and also to create additional employment opportunities;

(c) whether Government have any time-bound and target oriented plan to exploit this potential; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (d) A High Power Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri K.C. Pant, Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission to suggest suitable measures for strengthening the Khadi and Village Industries (KVI) sector. Based on the recommendations made by the Committee, a package for 5 years for KVI Sector was announced by the Government on 14.05.2001. The salient features of the package consist of Rebate policy for five years, options of Rebate and Market Development Assistance (MDA), Insurance cover to Khadi artisans, emphasis on improvement of Khadi products, creation of packaging and design facilities, measures to promote marketing, brand building, cluster development, focus on core areas and provision of additional working capital.

India's Status in Space Research

†2731. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India is lagging behind in the field of the exploration of space in comparision to other countries;

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the space research scientists have planned to launch their space shuttle in the space; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has been successful in developing world class satellites and launch vehicles/ rockets and utilising space systems in areas relevant to national development in a coast-effective manner.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. Government have no plans to launch a space shuttle.

Central Projects

2732. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Central Projects in progress;

(b) the amount spent thereon; and

(c) by when these are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) As on 1.7.2001, there are 461 projects in the Central Sector each costing Rs.20 crores and above under implementation.

(b) The amount spent on these 461 projects as on 1.7.2001 is Rs.54,340.92 crores against the currently anticipated cost of Rs.1,69,489 crores.

(c) According to the present completion schedule of projects, 113 projects are expected to be completed in the year 2001-2002, 80 projects in the year 2002-2003, 44 projects in the year 2003-2004 and 16 projects in the year 2004-2005. The balance 208 projects will be commissioned beyond March, 2005.

Release of money from MPLADS to Engineering Department

2733. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that MPLADS fund when released to any State Government Engineering Department, the money is being deposited in the State Government account and again being released in the shape of L.C. which is creating problems for implementation; and

(b) whether Government propose to issue a direction to the State Governments to spend the money at the District level without depositing the same in the State Government account?